



New-Plimouth, October 26. 1669.

THis Court taking into their consideration the usefulness and seasonableness of this Sermon, do commend the same to all the Churches and People of God in this Jurisdiction, for their serious perusall and improvement in the Lord; And do therefore Order the publishing thereof.

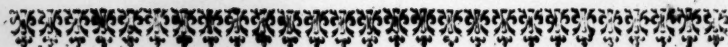
Nathaniel Morton Secretary.



THis Sermon and pious Labour of the Reverend Servant of the Lord, Mr. Thomas Walley, being perused, is allowed, as consenting to the healing Word of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, and worthy to be improved by all sorts in New-England, as a sovereign Remedy of divers Maladies; Whereupon is justly added

Imprimatur,

Charles Chauncy.
Thomas Shepard.





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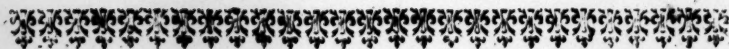
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Balm in Gilead

TO HEAL
SIONS WOUNDS:

OR,

A Treatise wherein there is a clear Discovery of the
most Prevailing Sickneses of *New-England*, both in the
Civill and Ecclesiasticall State; As also futable
Remedies for the Cure of them:

Collected out of that Spirituall Directory,
The Word of God.

Delivered in a SERMON Preached before the
Generall Court of the Colony of *NEW-PLIMOUTH*
on the first day of *June* 1669. being the

DAY of ELECTION

T H E R E.

By *Thomas Walley*, Pastor of the Church of Christ at
Barnstable in New-England.

Jer. 14. 18. Hast thou utterly rejected *Judah*? hath thy soul loathed *Zion*:
why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for
peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold
trouble.

Hosea 14. 1. O *Israel*, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen
by thine iniquity.

Jer. 6. 8. Be thou instructed, O *Jerusalem*, lest my soul depart from thee,
lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

Jer. 3. 22. Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your back-
slidings: Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.

C A M B R I D G E :

Printed by *S. G. and M. J.* 1 6 6 9.





To the Honoured,
THOMAS PRINCE Esq;
Governour of New Plimouth Colony in New-England;

A N D
The Worshipfull his Assistants.

Honoured Patriots,

VV Hen you were pleased to Call me to Preach this publick Sermon, I must confess by reason of my insufficiency for such a Work, and a crowd of business that then I was in, I could not rejoyce in it; but I looked upon the Call as a Call from God, and therefore submitted to it, knowing that God doth often use weak and worthless Instruments, that the glory might be his, and not ours: and was the further encouraged, because I have found you like Hezekiah, speaking comfortably to those that teach the good knowledge of the Lord. The Printing of this Sermon was far from my thoughts both in Studying and Preaching of it. I dare not say the matter is useles, but must confess the dress to be too uncomely, and will never be liked, if it come to the eyes of those that are either curious or captious. I conceive the reason why you Ordered the Printing of it, was, Because you judged it a seasonable Word, and therefore thought it would be profitable; and indeed the timing of things to their proper season, is one of the highest acts of practicall Wisdom. I did the more readily consent to the Printing of it, that I might not have the least Censure from those that, from my self, and all Gods people, deserve so much honour. Though in this Sermon my Weakness is exposed to publick view, yet if God may have honour, and any Soul profit, and I may be accounted obedient to you that are our Rulers, I am satisfied, I do account it a great mercy that we have such Rulers, that we may more safely publish Truth, then conceal it: if we conceal it, we fall into the hands of God, but if we publish it, we are not in danger of falling into the hands of men.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

The design of this Sermon is the Uniting of the People of God, for the wounds of some Churches bleed, if not fester. Worthy Senators, I may boldly publish for the honour of God and your honour, That such hath been your labour of love in the Churches, that you seem to take more delight in the Unity of the Churches, then in being Magistrates. This Sermon was once in your Ears, it's now in your Eyes, I desire the Lord may keep it in your Hearts; it may be it is providentially Printed for that end. As for my self, I know all are not Bezaleels or Aholiabs, and that he that is but a poor Labourer, and brings Stone and Morter to the Building is accepted of God. My hearty desire is, That you, our Honoured Governour and Magistrates, may be called The Repairer of breaches, The Restorers of paths to dwell in, The joy of many Generations; which is the earnest Prayer of him that is your daily Remembrancer at the Throne of Grace, and who is

Your most humble Servant, and less then
the least of all Saints,

Thomas Walley.

B A L M

Balm in Gilead to heal Sions Wounds.

JEREM. 8. 22.

Is there no Balm in Gilead? is there no Physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

IN this Chapter you may see what an evil and bitter thing Sin is, it will not be that at last which it is at first, though it be Honey at first, it will be Gall at last, it will be *bitterness in the latter end*: It makes persons unhappy both alive and dead; when living, it turns them out of their houses; and when dead, out of their graves, as in *ver. 1.* of this Chapter.

What woful work hath Sin made in the world? what incurable wounds hath it given to Kingdoms, Countries, Churches and Families? the most destroying Judgements, *Famine, Pestilence, War, Captivity*, are the bitter fruits of Sin; it layes a People under Spiritual Judgements, provokes God to depart, and opens a door to all woe and misery.

In this Chapter you finde God threatning, the Prophet lamenting the dreadful evils that were coming upon *Judah and Jerusalem*, and when he would comfort himself, his heart fainted; *when I would comfort my self against sorrow, my heart is faint in me*, *ver. 18.* the reason was, he saw that the people were resolved to go on in their sin, that God was resolved to go on in the way of his Judgements, *ver. 6.* compared with *ver. 13.*

The Prophet wonders, is even astonished, that a people that have so great Mercies, should be in danger of so great Miseries: They had a good God, and a good King; *ver. 19.* *Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her King in her?* God was not as yet departed. It's probable *Josiah* at present was their King, not as yet removed by death: it may be supposed that this part of the Prophecie relates to the time of his Reign, for he prophesied from the thirteenth year of his Reign, to the time of the Captivity, *Jer. 1. 2, 3.* This people will not part with their graven Images and strange vanities, therefore God will depart from them, and be a stranger to them.

In *ver. 20.* the Prophet shews them what will be the fruit of their folly in trusting to false Prophets, and relying upon their Predictions, at last they

Balm in Gilead

they shall despair of help, and cry out, *The harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved*; the time set by these false Prophets for deliverance was past, but they were not delivered.

In the Text the Prophet being in great amazement of Spirit, passionately puts forth three questions:

1. *Is there no Balm in Gilead?*
2. *Is there no Physician there?*
3. *Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?*

The two first of these Questions do not come from any doubt, but do strongly affirm that there was Balm in Gilead, and that there were Physicians there: The third Question is, *why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?* What is the reason that such admirable Helps should be no more helpful? that *Gileads Balm* and *Gileads Physicians* should be so unsuccessful. This was wonderful, that while *Sion* had such proper and precious Means for her Recovery, her Wound should gangrene and become incurable.

By *Gilead*, is meant either a City so called, *Hosea 6. 8. Gilead is a City of them that work iniquity*; it was a City of the Levites, the most famous in all the Land of *Gilead*, the whole Country took its name from it: Or else by *Gilead*, is meant the whole Land and Country of *Gilead*, which was on the other side of *Jordan*, and did belong to the *Reubenites* and *Manassites*, 2 Kings 10. 33. This Country of *Gilead* abounded with Balm; the *Ismaelites* that bought *Joseph* were carrying Balm from *Gilead* to *Egypt*, Gen. 37. 25. and the daughter of *Egypt* is bid to fetch Balm from *Gilead*, *Ezek. 27. 17.* which notes, That the most precious and sovereign Balm was there: as it grew in the Land of *Gilead*, so it was chiefly sold in the City of *Gilead*.

In former times there was no Balm in all the world of such account as this Balm. *Pliny* saith, *Balsamum uni terrarum Judea concessum*, as though it were a blessing vouchsafed to *Judea* onely. They traded with it to *Tyre*, that Merchandizing City, that then had the Trade of the World, and sent it far and near. One saith of this Balm, it was *Medicina difficiliorum Morborum*, A Medicine to heal the most difficult Diseases. All Nations must be beholding to *Israel* for Balm; noting, That all the World should be beholding to the Church for Health.

And as there was the best Balm in *Gilead*, so there were the best Physicians there: usually those Countries that abound with the best Medicines, have the most and best Physicians.

That which the Spirit of God tells us here, is, 1. That *Sion* was sick.

sick. 2. That *Sion* had the best and most proper Means for her Recovery; the best Balm, the best Physicians. 3. That though *Sion* had all these Means, yet she was not recovered.

Hence the Doctrine is,

Doct. That sometimes a People may be sick, and though they have the most proper and susable Means of Health, yet no Means may be effectual for their Recovery.

Thus it may be with Nations, Countries, Churches, they may have sickness in them, and though all Means be present for their Recovery, yet they may remain not healed of their sickness.

Let us consider what Means this People of *Israel* had from time to time to recover them of their Sicknesses.

1. They had the Prophets of God with them early and late, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. At this time they had the Prophet *Jeremiah*, the Prophet *Ezekiel*, who faithfully discovered to them their Sicknesses, their Danger, and the Remedy, yet they were not healed: These Prophets were continued to them till the destruction of the City and Temple.

2. They had the Ordinances of God, his healing Ordinances, and scarcely at any time in more purity then in the dayes of *Josiah*; yet their hearts went after the sins of *Manasseh*, the Abominations that were set up in his Reign.

3. They had a good King; *Josiah* was their King: you have an account of his goodness, 2 Chron. 34, 35 Chap. when he was but in the eighth year of his reign, he began to seek after the God of his father *David*, Chap. 34. 3. and in the twelfth year of his reign he put forth his utmost endeavours for a thorough-Reformation, cast out false Worship, set up the true Worship of God, laboured to settle every thing in the House of God according to the minde of God, and yet this people were not healed. It is observable, That in the twelfth year of *Josiah* the publick Reformation began, and in the thirteenth year this Prophet is sent from the Lord to call upon them to put away their abominations, that they may not be removed out of his sight; but all Means proves ineffectual, their hearts go after their Idols, they are not healed.

4. They had a good God; God was not as yet departed from them, he was in *Sion*, and would have healed them, Ezek. 24. 13. bestowed purging Means upon her, but she would not be healed.

So when *Israel* went out of *Egypt*, they fell into many sicknesses in the Wilderness; they had the proper Means for their Recovery, they had

Moses for their King and Prophet, they had Aaron the Lords High Priest, they had the Ark of God, the Ordinances of God, yet they provoked the Lord, contemned the Means of their healing, murmured at their Physicians; they were not healed, and therefore they consumed their days in vanity, and their years in trouble, Psal. 78. 33. Their carcases fell in the wilderness, Numb. 14. 32.

When they came into the Land of Canaan, and were filled with the blessings of God, there they sursetted; and fell into divers Diseases, they waxed fat, and began to kick, Deut. 32. 15. When they were poor, then they were hungry, and murmured at God; when they were rich, then they grew proud, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation; The Lord trusted them with healing Means, followed them with merciful Providences, yet they were not healed; or if they had any present healing, they quickly relapsed again: Amos 4. 6, 7. to the end of the Chap. the Lord deals with Israel by Judgements one after another, yet they are not healed.

When Christ came into the world, he found Church and State sick, both quite out of order; he was a skilful, yea the best Physician, and would have healed them, they had the best Means that ever people had, and yet they were not healed.

And the Apostles of Christ, though they were eminent Instruments in the hands of God, and did much in other Countries, yet could do little in their own Country for the healing of the daughter of Sion.

I shall now give you the Reasons, Why a people that are sick, and have the best Means for Recovery, yet are not recovered.

Reas. 1. Because oft-times the Diseases of Kingdomes, Countries and Churches are so occult and hid, that the wisest of Physicians cannot finde them out: Hence it comes to pass, that a people perish, or continue sick, because they do not finde out the reason of their sickness; for the sin of Achan things went ill with the Army of Israel, Josh. 7. and it was hid from Joshua and the people, till God revealed it. In Davids time, the Famine continued long, and the reason was not known, till God discovered it to be for the sin of Saul in slaying the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. 21. As secret sin in the heart causes decays of grace, so here. Many times God in afflicting hath an aim at a particular sin, and it's hard to find out what the sin is.

Reas. 2. Because sometimes the Disease is old, and deeply rooted, grown Malignant and Pestilential: when a people are hardened and rooted in their evils, they grow incurable; Jer. 13. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Custom in sin hinders the cure of it, it makes sin seem

lets

lets then formerly it did, it sears the Conscience, makes persons secure:

Reas. 3. Because of the opinion of the Patient: Sometimes a sick people think they are well, and have no need of any Physicians; they are not sensible of their sickness: hence Physicians are of no value with them; and it is not Gods way to bless the best Means to those that slight them: If a people contemn *Magistracy* and *Ministry*, though they are Gods Ordinances, yet God is provoked to withhold his blessings from them, so that they cannot prevent the ruine and destruction of a proud, wilful and stubborn people, that endeavour to exalt themselves above the Lord and his Appointments.

Reas. 4. Because when Means are used to cure the Disease that is most visible, some other Disease appears that is more dangerous, and proves an Impediment to the Cure, so that the sickness increaseth and becomes mortal. When God would have healed *Israel*, the iniquity of *Ephraim* appeared, *Hos. 7. 1.* Some think it refers to the time of *Jehu's* Reign, who was anointed in *Gilead* the City of Chirurgions, and was the Chirurgion of those Times; but when he was busie in the work of the Lord, destroying *Baal* and his Worship, then the iniquity of the ten Tribes appeared, which are called *Ephraim*, and the wickedness of *Samaria*, which was the Head of *Ephraim*. But what wickedness, and what iniquity did they discover? Surely it was their love to the sin of *Jeroboam*, their love to the Calves; so that the work of Reformation was at a stand, and *Israel* was not healed. Many persons never discover the wickedness of their hearts, till God gives them the Means of healing: When God brings Means home to them, their wounds and sores begin to smart, and they are enraged more then ever; and it may be such sins break forth, as they themselves never thought were in their hearts.

Reas. 5. Because those that are sick hearken to *Mountebanks*, rather then to experienced and tryed Physicians. The Jews in their sick estate had the false Prophets in high esteem, but persecuted the true; and this became the ruine of their Church and State: they looked upon the Lords Prophets as the cause of all their troubles, and hearkened to those that poisoned them in stead of healing them; this was the temper of the people in *Jeremiahs* time.

Reas. 6. Because sometimes God is so provoked, that he will bless no Means to a people: because of a peoples contempt of those Means God hath afforded them, therefore all Means are without effect for their good; that Word that was wont to be mighty and powerful, becomes a dead word, doth not quicken, it becomes the favour of death to death, 2 Cor. 2. 15.

Reas. 7. Sometimes those that are sick are not healed, Because the Physicians themselves cannot agree about the Means for cure; one saith, *This is the Disease*, another *That*; and one saith, *This must be the Cure*, another *That*: Some think the Disease not dangerous; some think the way to cure it is to let the sick Patient do what he will, and have what he will: this is either gross ignorance, or designed wickedness; others think, that the Disease can be cured by no other Means but *violent Means*, for some are cruel Physicians. Disagreement amongst those that should be Healers, is a great hindrance of *the healing of the daughter of Sion*.

USE 1. This Doctrine discovers to us, That we have cause to fear that our condition is but sad this day, for our case looks like the case of this people that the Prophet speaks of: We have *Gileads Balm*, and *Gileads Physicians*, and yet we are a sick people; we have *the Means of Healing* amongst us, that Means that is *proper and sutable*, and yet we continue a wounded and weak people. What Means can a people have more for Cure, then we have? God is yet in our *Sion*, we have Healing Ordinances, the *Preaching* of the Gospel, the *Seals* of the Covenant of Grace, Magistrates that would heal the Sicknesses of *Sion*, and Ministers that mourn for the hurt of the daughter of *Sion*.

Surely this day *New-England* is sick, the Country is a sickly Country; the Country is full of healthful Bodies, but sick Souls.

I shall name two or three of the Diseases that reign amongst us, and do most mischief.

1. The *Lethargy*, a cold sleepy Disease; there seems to be an insensibleness of sin and danger: *Faith* is dead, and *Love* is cold, and *Zeal* is gone; the wise and the foolish *Virgins* seem to be all asleep, in a deep sleep of *Security*: The power of godliness decays, the *Trumpet* sounds, the *Alarm* is given, yet the most sleep on.

O ye Christians that are not quite asleep! do not you perceive that the love of the most of the Professors of Religion is grown cold to *Christ*, to *Truth*, to *Ordinances*, to one another? and that which renders our case the more sad, is, that neither the *Word of God*, nor the *Rod of God* awakens us; though we see that Satan is busie, yet we are idle: indeed when Saints do least good, the Devil doth most hurt; while they sleep, he is awake. It is to be feared, that we shall be awakened in some dreadful way, by some sudden and unexpected Tempest of divine Wrath. A *Lacedonian* frame of spirit is hateful to God, *Rev. 3. 15, 16*.

2. There is a *Burning Fever* amongst us, a *Fire of Contention* in Towns, in Churches; Fuel is laid upon this Fire daily: What Town, or

what Church is there that is free from this Disease? the work of *Con-
tention* is followed, as though it were *the work of our day*, as though we
had nothing else to do. Many through the pride of their hearts are
very unquiet, and cannot be content in the places God hath set them in,
but strive for Mastery, Dominion and Rule, forgetting that counsel of
the Apostle, *My brethren, be not many Masters*, Jam. 3. 1. This comes
from pride and self-love: Proud Nature is discontented with the con-
dition that God hath put man in. The great reason why many are Un-
quiet, is, because they do not think they are high enough either in the
Church or in the Common-wealth. The *Contentions* and *Divisions* that
are amongst us, are a sign that lust reigns, and that Gods destroying
Judgements are not farre off. This *Fire of Contention* will consume all,
except God prevent.

3. *Many are possessed with an Evil Spirit.* It's observed, that when
Christ came into the world there were more *possessed with Evil Spirits*,
then had been in any Age: and it is to be wondred at, that in this time,
in which the Gospel is so clearly Preached, and Religion so much pro-
fessed, that so many should be *possessed with Evil Spirits*.

Some, with a *Spirit of Oppression, Cruelty, and Covetousness*; some, with
a *Spirit of Error and Delusion*; some, with a *Spirit of Envy and Jealousie*;
others are filled with *Pride in heart and manners*: Was it ever worse among
the Jews, then it is with us? That which is *threatened* as a fore Judgement
to the Jews, is in a great measure *fulfilled* among us this day, *Isa. 3. 5.*
*The people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neigh-
bour, the child shall behave himself proudly against the Ancient, and the
base against the Honourable.* Many of the Children of this generation,
if they consider their carriage to their Parents, will have little cause to
expect much obedience from their Children, and are like in their latter
years to reap the fruit of their present disobedience to their Parents. O
how sad is it, that there should be such a *Spirit of Profaneness, Loose-
ness and Wilfulness* against Counsel in our dayes! Truly, if the Means we
have do not cure us, what is like to cure us? God will either make us
better, or leave us; God would heal us, and we will not be healed.

Object. *If God be willing to heal a people, how is it then that they are not
healed? how can the Creature withstand him?*

Answer. God in *willing*, doth not alwayes *will* according to his Omni-
potent Power. God is said to be willing to heal a people, in that he
affords to them all *healing Means*; and though mans will cannot over-
come Gods power, yet it can resist Gods Means; neither is it a Meta-
physical

physical Inability in man, but a Formal Wilfulness that hinders healing.

When a people through their Wilfulness grow worse and worse under the Means of Healing, they resist the means of their healing, and their condition becomes desperate.

Having discovered to you some of the Diseases that are amongst us, it being so evident that we are a sick people, that we may be sensible of the sadness of our condition, let us consider what the evils of Sickness are.

1. *Sickness takes away the Comfort of Society*, so that the company of dearest Relations becomes burdensome. This is the Evil of some of our Sicknesses; those that were wont to *take sweet counsel together, to go to the House of God together*, now are weary of each others company; those that formerly could walk together with one heart, in one way, that could *Pray together, Sing together, Humble themselves together*, now they are estranged one from another; either they have no Communion, or no comfort in Communion.

2. *Sickness makes the best and most pleasant food burdensome*: As the full stomach, so the sick stomach loaths the honey-comb. The sick man, *Psal. 107. 18.* his soul is said to *abhor all meats*; this is another evil Effect of the Diseases that are amongst us: by reason of Sickness, the Ordinances of God that were formerly sweet and pleasant, are now become burdensome. Have not many cause to be convinced that they are sick, seeing they finde that those Ordinances and Duties that were in times put their meat and drink, and of a refreshing nature, are now slighted and disesteemed, of no account with them? nay, some (so sad is their case) abhor the *spiritual food* that once they found sweetness in, which is a sign of dreadful Apostacy.

3. *Sickness brings a Consumption of Flesh and Spirit*; this is another sad Effect of our Sicknesses. How many be there this day that have *leanness in their Souls*? their graces languish; Grace it self seems to be ready to die.

4. *Sickness takes away Beauty*: *Psal. 39. 11.* *His beauty consumes away like a moth*: The Nazareths were blacker then a coal, not known in the streets, *Lam. 4. 8.* Spirituall sicknesses have stained the Beauty of the whole Country. When *Sion* was a *Praise in the Earth*, and her Renown was great, Holiness and Righteousness, Peace and Unity were her Beauty; but these are in a great measure lost, and her Beauty is gone.

The Beauty of many of the Professors of Religion is so much marred, that

that they are scarcely known by their *Duties, Dealings, Love, Humbleness, Meekness*, as they were in times past. By *Pride, Covetousness, Wantonness, Forwardness*, God is dishonoured, and their glory is gone. O the wonderfull Change that Spiritual sickness hath made!

5. *Sickness is a forerunner of Death*; when there is a sick Bed, there is an expectation of a Grave. *Heman* speaks personally of himself, *Psal.* 88.3. *My life draws nigh unto the grave*: Our Sicknesses give us cause to fear we are not farre off the grave. When the best and most proper Physick will not work, it's a sign that Death approacheth. Are we not this day making graves for all our Blessings and Comforts? Have we not reason to expect that ere long our Mourners will go up and down, and say, *How is New England fallen! That Land that was a Land of Holiness, hath lost her Holiness: that was a Land of Righteousness, hath lost her Righteousness: that was a Land of Peace, hath lost her Peace: that was a Land of Liberty, is now in sore Bondage!* Sin brings Death near, and sets God as farre off; and hence we must be miserable. All that come to visit us, had need to minde us of our latter end, the death of our Mercies. If God deal with us, as he hath been wont to deal with others, he will make us a better people, or leave us. When a people have the Means of Healing, and are not healed, there is cause to fear that God loaths and rejects them. See how the Prophet expositulates the case with God, *Jerem.* 14.19. *Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Sion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble.*

There are three things speak sadly to us, and tell us we have little cause to be secure.

1. That there are so few born to Jesus Christ: Indeed Children are multiplied, but there is not much cause of joy therewith, but rather of fear that they are born for the Sword, and Famine, and other Judgements: when a Land bears not to Christ, it is a sign the Children therein are born to Judgement: How much hath God estranged himself from his Ordinances? how little Converting-work is there among us? we see that a great part of the young generation are profane, and spend the best of their time in Satans service, and *know not the God of their fathers.*

2. Another thing that speaks sadly to us, is, That under all the means of grace, there is so little Spiritual growth amongst those that are born to Jesus Christ. Barrenness makes way for cursing and rejection.

3. The Noise that is in the House of God, a confused Noise: This is
that

that which God could never endure in his House, it exceedingly stirs-up his wrath: When the Temple was to be built, there was not to be the noise of a Hammer, 1 Kings 6. 7. It is a dangerous thing to cause God to live unquietly in his own House, to make him weary of his own dwelling-place. God was never weary of the noise of his peoples Prayers in his House, but of the noise of their Contentions; the noise of their Prayers is pleasant, but the noise of these Contentions his soul abhors.

USE 2. Let this be matter of *Admiration*, as well as of *Humiliation* to us, that a sick people that have all Means to heal them, are not healed; that those who have *Gileads Balm*, and *Gileads Physicians*, are yet sick; and if we do not wonder at it, strangers will hereafter, That a people that have such proper surable Means, are still unrecovered, and dying under them. I speak not to flatter; We have a godly Magistracy, that have made it manifest that they are willing, yea earnestly desirous of healing the sicknesses of Church and State; We have godly Ministers, that I am confident would spend and be spent for the Recovery of the health of the daughter of Sion; We have holy Ordinances, and we have some Mourning and Praying Saints, that lament the evils that are among us; and Gods Providences call upon us daily to get our sicknesses healed: and is it not a wonder, that a people that have such Means and Mercies should still languish of their Diseases? Oh that that which is said of Nineveh, might never be said of us, *There is no healing of thy bruises, thy wound is grievous*: Nahum 3. 19. It would be sad, if God should threaten us as he doth Egypt, Jer. 46. 11. *In vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured*. Or if God should say as once concerning Babylon, Jer. 51. 9. *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her, and let us go every one into his own Country*. It was no wonder that these Heathen Nations could not be healed, but it is matter of astonishment that Sion is not, that New-England should have so much Means of healing, and yet continue sick; that a people that are lifted up to Heaven with Mercies, should be so likely to be thrown down to Hell.

USE 3. Let it serve to perswade *Gileads Physicians* to put forth their utmost endeavours for the healing of the wounds and sicknesses of the daughter of Sion.

I would direct this Use to our Honoured Magistrates, to my Reverend Brethren in the Ministry, and to all Mourning and Praying Saints.

First, To you who are our Honoured Magistrates, who are by the Providence of God *Paters Patrie*, The Fathers of our Country; I hope it will not be called Presumption, if I should give my humble Advice for the

the healing of Sions Sickness, and leave it at your feet. God hath called you to be *Healers* to a poor sick Country: That word in Scripture that is rendred to *govern*, is divers times rendred to *heal*; so *Isa. 30. 26.* and in *Isa. 3. 6, 7.* the *Rulers* are called *Healers*: the Prophet tells us, that when the people by their sin have brought all things into Confusion, and their ruine almost present, then they shall be desirous of healing Rulers, *A man shall take hold of his brother, and shall say, Be thou our Ruler, and let this Ruine be under thy hand: but ver. 7. In that day shall be swear, saying, I will not be an Healer*; the meaning is, *a Ruler*: A Disease sometimes is so desperate, no Physician will undertake its cure; the Patient so froward and unruly, that none will meddle with him: this may at last be the condition of a froward people. The Lord keep us from that woful day.

That I would humbly offer, is this:

1. That you do your utmost for the Extirpation of Profaneness, it is a growing Evil in the Country: This is one of the great Works God hath called you that are *Magistrates* and *Deputies* unto; I know your hearts are upon this Work: if there be not enough done already to prevent Profaneness, I beseech you do more, and see that your Laws be put in Execution; and especially let it be your care, That the Lords Sabbaths may be sanctified: Give your Civil Sanction to that holy Command of God. Those that would dispute away the Sanctification of the Christian Sabbath, do but dispute away the Power of Godliness: it is Christs Institution, the Observation of it hath the influence of a peculiar Blessing. In the Primitive Times the Observation of it was a Badge of Christianity. This was a common Question propounded to those, that would joyn with the Assemblies of the Saints, *Servasti Dominicum?* The Answer was, *Christianus sum, intermittere non possum.* If this Day be slighted, Practical Religion will quickly be lost, and a door will be opened for Gods severest Judgements. Slighting of the Lords Sabbaths, and a decay of the power of Godliness, usually go together. The *Profane in Practice*, and the *Erroneous in Judgement*, are the great Enemies of Sanctifying Sabbaths. Let us remember, The Observation of it hath the Promise of God: The Fire of Gods Wrath is not like to come where his Sabbaths are observed.

2. Let it be your Endeavour to settle the Preaching of the Gospel in all places within your Jurisdiction, by those that are in some measure fitted; you will finde such places where the Preaching of the Gospel is long wanting, will prove the Nurseries of Profaneness; such places will breed up Enemies to God and Jesus Christ. I doubt not but some

think it their Priviledge and Liberry to live without a Gospel-Ministry; such persons are either grossly Ignorant, or grossly Erroneous. Your Endeavours to set up Lights in such dark places, will be pleasing to God: it will be an honour to God, and an honour to you, if you see that Christ be Preached in every corner of the Colony. It is by Christ that *Kings-reign*, and that *Rulers-rele*, Prov. 8. 15, 16. You are Christ's Officers, though not in the Church, and are to labour his Exaltation, and your work is, to labour that all may be brought in subjection to him.

3. Let all Incendiaries be branded, all such as are stirrers up of Strife and Division, that are *Salamanders*, that love to live in the Fire, that are Fire-brands in Church and Common-wealth, that are Instruments of Contention in Court and Country; let such be marked in the Churches, and let them be abhorred by all that love God, *Rom. 16. 17.* they are Instruments of great evil: Let their Corruptions be kept under by good Laws, and their Manners healed. It's a bitter Imprecation the Apostle hath, *Gal. 3. 12. I would they were cut off that trouble you.*

There is a Story, that the *Suevians* had a Law, *That in a fray where Swords were drawn, if a Woman or a Child did but cry Peace, though they were a great way off, they must end the quarrel, or else be died that strook the next Blow after Peace was named.* But alas, where Contentions are, the noise is so great that those that cry *Peace* are not heard; nay, those that speak of *Peace* are accounted Enemies. Some are of such unquiet spirits, they make the places where they live uncomfortable.

4. Let it be your great care, That the great Truths of God, the Faith once committed to the Saints, may be preserved: *Buy the Truth, and sell it not, Prov. 23. 23.* Truth is the most precious Jewel that God hath trusted his people with. Satan hath been labouring to rob us of this our greatest Jewel; through the Apostacy of some, Error hath been spread, and Truth is clouded in the eyes of too many. The preservation of Truth requires much Wisdome, Zeal, Tendernefs and Moderation.

There is a necessity of Wisdome in the management of this great work, for you will finde, that persons that are in Error are of divers sorts:

1. Some have *weak understandings*; and yet have sincere hearts, tender Consciences, and unwilling'y differ from the generality of the godly. Pity and forbearance is due to such.

2. There are others that shew much *willfulness, pride and forwardness*; nothing of Conscience; have a frenzy, a Madness. These ought to be kept from hurting others.

3. There is a difference to be put between *lesser and greater Errors*, for:

for there are *Fundamentalia in Fide*, which are called *Magnalia Dei*, and there are *Minutia*: Zeal must be wisely ordered, according to the nature of Truths. It would argue Hypocrisie to be substantial in Circumstantial Truths, and circumstantial in the Substantials of Faith and Repentance. *Paul's* counsel to *Titus* was, in matters of Consequence to affirm constantly, Tit. 3. 8. but to avoid needless questions, ver. 9. Those Truths that more especially concern Gods glory and mans salvation, should be especially prized & preserved. Labour to keep the great truths of God in credit.

It would not consist with love to God and Jesus Christ, to tolerate that which would blaspheme the Name of God, or damn the Souls of men: 1

Neither would it consist with our profession of love to Christ or Saints, to trouble those that peaceably differ from the generality of Gods people in lesser things. Those that are like to live in Heaven with us at last, we should endeavour they might live peaceably with us here. Those that differ in lesser things, and do not infringe the just Liberties of others, why should they not have peace? A well-bounded Toleration were very desirable in all Christian Common-wealths, that there may be no just occasion for any to complain of Cruelty or Persecution; but it must be such a Toleration, that God may not be publickly blasphemed, nor Idolatry practised. 2

Neither ought any Error to be tolerated, that hath a tendency in its own nature to Profaneness, or the disturbing of Peace and Order in Church or State. You are to labour to do all things so, that you may keep God and Christ with you. 3:

Though it be the duty of Magistrates to see that the great Truths of God be not vilified, nor trampled in the dirt; yet this I judge I may confidently affirm, That Truth never get ground by a violent opposition of smaller Errors: Yet it is the duty of the people of God to contend for the least of Truths, and it should be their endeavour in the Spirit of love and meekness, to convince persons of their lesser Errors, and those that do differ ought to be of a teachable spirit, and to keep a holy fear of departing from the common faith, though in the least things; for, when persons easily let go lesser Truths, they quickly fall into great Errors. 4

Secondly, I have a word to my Reverend Brethren in the Ministry, and this I would press upon my self and you. 5

1. Let us all be quickly and deeply sensible of the wounds of *Sion*, of breaches in the Walls of *Jerusalem*; else we cannot pray aright for its healing and repairing; let not us be secure, while *Sion* is sick: Let it be our care to kill the Cockatrice in the Egge, to make an end of Differences as soon as they begin: if breaches be not repaired, they grow great quickly. 6

ly, if a house be on fire, if the fire be not quenched quickly, afterward it will be too late to attempt it. Let not the beginnings of Divisions be contemptible; a weak Enemy, being slighted, becomes potent: A wound when it is green may be quickly healed, but if it be let fester and gangrene, at last it is past cure. The spirits of persons are not much embittered at first, whereas afterwards they become irreconcilable. As you are Watchmen, so watch the times and seasons to preserve and recover Peace in the places God hath set you in.

2. Labour to see Eye to Eye; be of one minde and heart: this will help to make up the glory of the best times. *Isa. 52.8. Thy Watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye:* they shall be of the same judgement, and speak the same thing. We that are Leaders of the people, must take heed we do not cause them to erre: Let it be our care to subject our judgements to the Word of God, and take heed that we our selves never become Sect-masters; and therefore we had need beware lest Pride lead us into Errour and Singularity. It should be the great work of Ministers, to keep themselves humble, to tread in the steps of our dear Lord, who is our Pattern.

3. Labour to reconcile Differences by strong Arguments, with meekness of Spirit; put an end to Divisions, if Self-denial will do it; become *all things to all men*. Let it be your great aim to unite men to Christ, and one unto another. And for that end, Deny your selves for Christ's sake; bear as farre as you can without sin, with the weakness and frowardness of those that are sick.

4. Let not the Kids of the Flock be forgotten, they are Members with-us of the same Body, let them have your love and care; pray much for them, labour to teach them the good wayes of the Lord, the Trade-way to Heaven: and the more hopeles you are of those that are grown to years, by reason of their Stubbornness, the greater let your care be of those that are but in their tender years: Catechizing would be of great use in every Congregation; and where there is but one Officer in a Church, and no more can be had, it will be necessary to get the help of some able Christian in the work of Teaching the Children of the Congregation.

Thirdly, A further word of Counsel, is to all you Saints of the Most High, that love Sion, and are sensible of the sicknesses of it.

1. Labour to get all your Parts & Gifts sanctified, that they may not puff you up, and insnare you. Some of you through the goodness of God, and his rich grace, have greater Attainments in the knowledge of the Mysteries

of the Gospel then others, be you more Exemplary for Humbleness and Meekness then others. One great reason why there are so many Sicknesses in the daughter of Sion, is, because the Gifts of Christians are no more sanctified: when Gifts are not sanctified, they occasion Pride the Mother of Contention; so that those that should lead the people into Peace and Love, lead them into Divisions, and are Firebrands in the Houses of God.

2. Endeavour to mortifie those Lusts that incline you to Contention; for Contentions do not come so much from outward provocations, as from inward corruptions: Jam. 4.1. *All wars come from lusts*; if Pride, Passion, and Self-love were mortified, there would be more peace and agreement: but mens lusts are so dear to them, they will rather adventure their own peace and the Churches, then part with them.

3. Labour for that *Wisdom* that is from above, which is pure, gentle, peaceable, easie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, Jam. 3.17. *If you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, ver. 14. but be ashamed whatever your parts and gifts are. Take our Saviours counsel, Mark 9.50. Have silt in your selves, and peace one with another: the salt of Wisdom tends to Peace and Unity.*

4. Be sure you love the publick good of Sion; if the love of Sion doth reign in your hearts, you will seek the welfare of it: It was the true Mother that would not suffer the Child to be divided. Thou shouldest so love the peace of the Church, that when a storm begins thou shouldest say, *If I am the man that cause this, cast me out, let the Church have her peace.* The Romans had a Temple dedicated *Jovi depositorio*, the Senators went thither and laid down their mutual Contentions, before they went to the Senate-house: and divers of the Heathen would lay aside their private Quarrels for the Common Good, which doth shame some Christians in our dayes.

5. Let those that agree in Fundamentals, and have Union with the same Head, walk together in love and peace: this we are pressed to, Phil. 3.16. Why should there not be a hearty love between those that are of the same Faith? Remember that the *Peace-makers* are blessed: Peace and Union are humane Saviours to Countries and Churches; *Dulce nomen pacis*, Psal. 133. But you must also remember this, That your Labour for Unity will be in vain, if you are enemies to Order: Keeping the Order God hath appointed, is the way to Peace and Unity. The Church is that one *Body of Christ*, yet this Body is made up of distinct Members, and every Member hath its own operation; when every Member doth

his own office, the Body is most lovely; yet where the foundation is gold, silver, and precious stones, though there be some hay and stubble in the Superstructure, there ought to be a Christian forbearance.

6. Pray for the Health of *Sion*, for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, *Psal.* 122. 6. If the Spirit of Prayer for Unity were poured out upon the people of God, we should not be long without the blessing of Peace in the Churches.

Pray then that Means may be effectual for the recovery of the daughter of *Sion* from her Sickneses; that *Gileads Balm* and *Gileads Physicians* may do good.

Pray down Divisions.

Pray down Errour and Profaneness.

Pray that the daughter of *Sion* may not want *Nursing-fathers*, that the Land of Liberty may not become the House of Bondage; and this will be the way to have the God of Peace dwell among us. As we carry it towards God, so will God manifest himself unto us: Let us cry as the Prophet, *Jerem.* 17. 14. *Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed.* A like Prayer we read in *Psal.* 60. 2, God hath promised, that if we pray and humble our selves, he will hear from heaven, and heal the Land, *2 Chron.* 7. 14. and sometimes he doth heal a froward people, when they are like to perish of their wounds; *Isa.* 57. 17, 18. *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him:* when we go about to heal by our own skill without God, we heal but slightly, *Jer.* 8. 11.

I shall onely adde some Motives to perswade every one in his place and calling, to labour to recover the health of the daughter of *Sion*.

Motive 1. If there be Sicknes in the Church, there will be little health in the Common-wealth: In the Land of *Judah*, when the building of the Temple was neglected, the Worship of God defiled, a decay in Religion, it never went well with the Common-wealth. Let us believe it, that things amiss in the houses of God; are the chief cause that it goes ill with the Country.

2. Sickneses in Churches endanger the damnation of the Souls of many: they hinder Conversion, harden many hearts, bring the Wayes and Worship of God into contempt; and these Evils are the fruit especially of Division among those that profess Godliness: If Contentions reign in Churches, either the world will never think well of Christ, or never believe such Members of Churches are Christs Disciples, *John* 13. 35.

What account can be given at last for this, that Christ and the true
Religion

Religion are contemned by the world for the sake of the Professors of it? It's sad, that in our dayes many Professors live as though there were no *Canaanites* nor *Perizzites* in the Land. If ever you would have Christ and his Wayes well thought of, labour after *Unity*; If you would have any more Converted by the Preaching of the Gospel, labour after *Unity*; If you would enjoy your Church-Priviledges, and your Civil Peace, labour for *Unity*; If you would have God remove his frowns, his afflicting hand from us, labour after *Unity*; If ever you would be serviceable to Christ, and one to another, labour after *Unity*.

The members of the Body do not give mutual nourishment, except they be joynd each to other. It is not enough that you keep up the Ordinances of God for his honour, for the good of your Souls, and for the good of the Souls of others, except you remove the stumbling-blocks that lye in the way of others, your *Contentions*, and *Covenant Practices*, &c.

O you that are the Professors of Religion! it seems to be in your hand to save or damn Souls, your gracious Conversation might be a means to convert others, and the contrary may be a means of damning others.

3. Endeavouring to recover the health of the daughter of *Sion*, will be as cross a work to the Devil as any you can do; it will be a crossing of Satan in one of the greatst designs he hath on foot in the world: he is alwayes either acting the part of a *Lion*, or the part of a *Serpent*, either persecuting by open Enemies, or dividing dearest friends. Those that have reconciling Spirits, that are Peace makers, counter-work Satan, they oppose him in his great design.

4. For your Encouragement, know, that the Lord doth in a special manner care for *Sion*; He loves the Gates of *Sion*, more then all the *anctings* of *Jacob*, *Psal.* 87. 2. The Church is more dear to him then the Common-wealth: As *God*, he cares for the Common-wealth; as a *Father* he cares for the Church: yet Magistracy is Gods Ordinance, for the help and preservation of the Churches. And God in giving his Laws, doth first command things concerning himself and his Worship.

The Church is supposed to be a poor *Orphan*, and *Kings* and *Queens* are to be their *Nursing-fathers* and *Nursing-mothers*, *Isa.* 49. 23.

5. It will be an Honour to you, to be Instruments to heal the daughter of *Sion*; God will take it kindly at your hands, and honour you that thus honour him, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. Those that build the old waste places,

thee !

that raise up the foundations of many generations, such shall be called, The repairers of the breaches, Isa. 58. 12.

6. Consider this, the time may come that Churches, Ordinances, Communion with Saints, may be more precious then the Gold of Ophir.

I shall close with this one Word, which is to Exhort and Perswade you all, to encourage and strengthen the Hearts and Hands of those that God hath in a special manner made *Physicians*; do as the people did, *Nehem. 10. 29. They clave to their Brethren the Nobles, &c.* Take heed of discouraging them, but say to those that are your Rulers, *This matter of Healing the daughter of Sion belongs to you, but we will be with you, Ezra 10. 4.* then it is well, when all work together for God. It is said, *2 Chron. 30. 26. Hezekiah humbled himself, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and wrath came not in his dayes.* If the Lord give us hearts to take these Counsels which he hath offered to us this day, we shall be the more likely to go to our fathers in peace, and leave a blessing behinde us for Posterity.

F I N I S.
